



# Department of Justice

Acting United States Attorney Lawrence G. Brown  
Eastern District of California

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## **LODI WOMAN CONCEALS RESIDENCE IN SYRIA WHILE COLLECTING SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY BENEFITS**

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—Acting United States Attorney Lawrence G. Brown announced today that MAHA JAMIL BAROODY, 64, of Lodi, Calif., pleaded guilty today before United States District Judge John A. Mendez to theft of U.S. Social Security Administration funds.

This case is the product of extensive investigation by the United States Social Security Administration, Office of the Inspector General.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Michelle Rodriguez, who is prosecuting the case, BAROODY admitted this morning that, between November 6, 2002 and August 28, 2008, she unlawfully failed to report five periods (each for approximately nine months) during which she lived outside the United States in Syria while receiving social security SSI disability benefits. SSI disability benefits are supplemental funds provided for qualified U.S. residents.

On occasional trips to the United States, BAROODY would visit the Social Security Administration Office to update her continuing eligibility, to ensure future SSI disability payments. BAROODY, however, failed to disclose her residence in Syria. Under these false pretenses, BAROODY stole \$36,982.76 in social security funds that she was not entitled to receive. According to the plea agreement, BAROODY will make full restitution to the United States.

If convicted, the maximum penalty BAROODY faces is 10 years in prison, a three-year term of supervised release, and a fine of up to \$250,000. The actual sentence, however, will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

Sentencing is scheduled on April 28, 2009.

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